The FAA's decision to reduce flights at O'Hare International Airport starting November 1 will have a devastating impact on the local economy, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. said today.

"A bad situation is about to get worse. Studies show that every canceled 747 costs a local economy about $500,000 in lost business. These caps will cost local businesses millions of dollars a day," Jackson said. "Flight caps will negatively impact every hotel, restaurant, cab company and tourist stop. It will hurt Navy Pier, McCormick Place, Michigan Avenue and the Loop."

"The nation's aviation industry is growing at 4 percent per year, but Chicago's has grown at only 2 percent due to constrained capacity. Starting in November, we'll see the first-ever *decrease* in Chicago's aviation industry excluding the post 9-11 period," he said.

The FAA announced Wednesday that O'Hare arrivals during peak hours will be reduced from a high of around 120 per hour to 88 between noon and 9:00 PM. As a result, United Airlines has agreed to cancel or reschedule 20 flights per day, and American Airlines 17 flights per day.

Calling for a quick solution, Jackson said, "Chicago needs new runways in a new airspace and to expand aviation capacity and bolster the local economy, now. That's what the Abraham Lincoln National Airport in the south suburbs does."

"Lincoln Airport is the quickest, cheapest, safest and cleanest solution to Chicago's aviation crisis. To be built through a public-private partnership, Lincoln Airport can be operational within four years at no cost or risk to taxpayers or the airlines," the congressman added.

"Low-cost carriers are the wave of the future and they are virtually frozen out of O'Hare. Lincoln Airport will be the first airport in the U.S. designed, built and priced to attract discount carriers."

Jackson formally submitted his Lincoln Airport proposal to the FAA last Friday in Washington.